(c) In compliance of the directions of the Honourable Supreme Court, the Central Government (Ministry of Environment & Forests) has constituted the Central Ground Water Board as an Authority by notification issued on 14th Jan. 1997.

Excess Traffic on Roads

886. SHRI PAWAN DIWAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of road traffic on National Highways in total percentage of road traffic in the country;

(b) whether the Government are aware that in the 1,62,000 kms. of State and National Highways a big portion *i.e.* 64% in one lane only whereas a small portion 2% is four lane and remaining portion is two lane; and

(c) it so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for tackling the problem of excess traffic on roads in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) National Highways carry about 40% of the total traffic in the country.

(b) The Central Government is primarily concerned with the development of National Highways only. The development of other roads falls within the purview of respective State Governments. National Highways totalling a length of 34,608 Km., comprises 78% of two lane sections, 20% single lane sections and 2% four lane sections.

(c) To tackle the problem of excess traffic, the National Highways are being widened in phases subject to the availability of funds.

[English]

Return of Artefacts

887. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA :
SHRI DHIRENDRA AGARWAL :
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Government have made any move for return of the large number of Indian artefacts including Kohinoor taken by the British from India during their reign over the country; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the U.K. Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Sankosh River Project of W.B

888. SHRI SIBU SOREN : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Sankosh River Project of West Bengal is being included in the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the areas of tea-gardens, forests and agriculture land involved in the project; and

(d) the details of land proposed to be acquired and the total number of persons likely to be displaced due to Sankosh Project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) and (b) The Sankosh Multipurpose Project would be taken up for implementation in the IX Plan as soon as it is finalised.

(c) and (d) As per the Environmental Impact Assessment studies carried out by Water and Power Consultancy Services Ltd., (WAPCOS) recently, the total land needs to be acquired for the canal portion of Sankosh Project in India is 2574 ha. The detailed break up of land to be acquired are:—

(i)	Tea Garden (ha.)	936.18
(ii)	Forest (ha.)	1145.16
(iii)	Agriculture (ha.)	342.52
(iv)	Fallow land and land not available for cultivation (ha.)	150.17
	Total	2574.03

The total number of affected persons are about 21500 in West Bengal.

Setting up of Sub-regional Airline

889. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have agreed to set up a sub-regional Airline to be jointly run with Thailand, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh; and